

PR 5219

. R26L6



0 014 527 191 5

Hollinger Corp.
pH 8.5

W. H. Crump Esq

with Mayne Reid's Compl.

LOVE'S MARTYR,

PR 5213
R 20 L 6

A TRAGEDY,

BY MAYNE REID.



PHILADELPHIA :
PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR.

UNITED STATES JOB PRINTING OFFICE, LEDGER BUILDING.

1849.



LOVE'S MARTYR,

A Tragedy,

BY MAYNE REID.



PHILADELPHIA:
PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR.

.....

UNITED STATES JOB PRINTING OFFICE, LEDGER BUILDING.

.....

1849.

PR 5319
.R26 L6

CAST OF CHARACTERS,

As Originally Performed at the Walnut St. Theatre, Phila.

CASIMIR, a General in the Venetian Service. MR. JAS. WALLACK, JR.
LORENZO, a Friar, and Confessor to Marinella. MR. RICHINGS
CARAFFA, a Venetian Noble. MR. NEAFIE
BASIL. MR. WHEATLEY
DUKE OF VENICE. MR. McKEON
LUIGI, a Venetian Gentleman. MR. STEVENS
GIACOMO. MR. LEONARD
MARINELLA. MISS ALEXINA FISHER

SCENE—*Venice and its Environs.* TIME—1400.

LOVE'S MARTYR.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

PALACE GARDEN.—*Enter Caraffa and Giacomo.*

Caraffa. You're certain, Giacomo, she walks to-day?

Giacomo. Quite sure, my lord; it is her daily habit.

Car. Alone, think you?

Gia. Not so, my lord.

Car. Ha! how? by whom attended?

Gia. By her confessor, the Fray Lorenzo;
Since the General

Went to the wars, 't has been my lady's pleasure
To be attended thus.

Car. Hell hang the father for his courtesy!
You're sure she'll take this path?

Gia. She ever does, my lord; it is
Her favorite walk.

Car. Away, then! here, a ducat—get you gone!
[*Exit Giacomo.*]

Now, by Saint Marc, I'm in a fever fit
To see this saintly dame.
For weeks I have not looked upon her face—
And such a face! there may be up in heaven;
There is not here in Venice other such!
The lips a pair of rose leaves quaintly curved!
Her eyes two liquid stars—brow swan-like white—
Hair of the midnight's hue, and over all
A robe of spotless virtue! Virtue—bah!
It may be found in Parma making cheese,
Or 'mong the highshod Lombards—where the toil
Of moiling life works out the sin in sweat;
There's no such item in the mart of Venice;
The month that followed on her marriage morn,
The what with costly shows and masquerade,
She bid full well to crown her sovereign lord,
And ruin him besides: but now all's changed—
For since his absence, she has kept herself
More closely than a nun; as I believe,
By the advice of this same meddling priest:
Well—well—there's fortune here—this pretty note,
Which I have ope'd and read, a common trick,

And sealed again—this doting husband's letter—
 Filled with soft speeches and confiding folly—
 Gives wholesome cause for calling on the lady—
 Sweet welcome intercessor! Ha! she comes!
 And, as the fiend would have it, comes the monk
 In closest converse with her! by St. Jude,
 Had I a wife of such a build as this,
 I'd have no priest thus whisper in her ear;
 Who knows, but that old beads and scapular
 May love her too? Mount Hecla's breast of flame
 Burns not less fiercely under robes of snow,
 Than Etna with the vine-wreath on his brow!
 And such a sun to draw the fever out!
 The very veins upon her ankle joints
 Seem dancing provocation, and the play
 Of those warm wicked eyes would melt the ice
 Of Alpine avalanche!
 My countship for his monkship's privilege—
 Not having that, let's hear a chapter now
 From the confessional!

[Retires.]

Enter Marinella and Lorenzo.

Marinella. What! love my lord?
 Why, good Lorenzo, you do frighten me;
 Be sure I love my lord—How could I else?
 All Venice loves my lord!

Car. (Aside.) There you make a slight mistake, I think.

Lor. That is but admiration of
 Your lord's high qualities; as we admire
 The sun that gives us light—the flower fragrance—
 'Tis not that love of which I question you.

Mar. Oh! then you mean the love I've read about
 In those sweet story books where it is said
 That all our senses are the slaves of it:
 The harshest sounds seem soft and musical!
 The rudest picture seems a paradise—
 And all the air is fragrant when we love!
 Tell me, good father, if all this be true,
 For I have never felt a love like this.

Lor. Have you not felt at times a secret pain
 When that my lord hath smiled, or seemed to smile
 Too tenderly on others that were fair?

Car. (aside.) What the devil is the old dotard driving at?

Mar. Not I i' faith! I know not what you mean;
 What is it, father?

Lor. "A passion strange, though natural;
 And ever the concomitant of love:
 Without it love would change to simple friendship,
 And thus be robbed of half its sweet delight—
 Although it is a very thorn itself,

Yet like the thorn—the guardian of the rose—
It is love's sentinel." Its name is
Jealousy!

Mar. Oh! jealousy? I've read—a fearful thing!
It often causes murders and strange crimes.
Father, you could not think? no—no—I'm sure
I never have felt jealousy.

Lor. So much the worse—alas! my fears are right!
There's no love here. (*Aside.*) Answer me, Marinella,
Do you not feel at times a happy yearning
To kiss my lord, your husband?

Car. (aside.) In faith, a very interesting question
To put to a wife.

Mar. Be sure I do.

Lor.—You do—you do!

Mar. Aye, father, what is there strange in 't?
I feel the same to kiss good brother Basil.

Lor. Ha!

Mar. What mean you, father, by that exclamation?
Is 't wrong to kiss my brother? I have done 't
A thousand times.

Lor. You must do so no more.

Mar. And wherefore, holy father? that good book,
You taught me to obey, has thus declared
That I should love my brother as myself.
And why not show my love by kissing him?

Lor. Your state is changed, and you are now a wife.

Mar. And why not now, as when a simple maid?
I must not kiss my own dear brother Basil?
My lord would even wish to see me do 't!
I'm angry with you, Fray Lorenzo,
Indeed, I'm angry with you!

Car. (aside.) By the mass, a strange dialogue!

Lor. Alas! poor child, you'll have more cause for grief,
When you do know why thus I counsel you.
Believe me, 'tis with reason.

Mar. With reason? What mean you, father?

Lor. That the Count Basil—

Mar. Speak, father, speak!

Lor. Is not thy brother!

Car. (aside.) Ha!

Mar. Father Lorenzo, what strange jest is this?

Lor. It were a cruel jest, if it were one—
Alas! it is no jest.

Mar. Oh! say not so! say you are mocking me—
For if 't be true, the truth will break my heart.

Lor. Daughter, from childhood I have been thy friend,
As long before the world had seen thy face
I was thy father's—I have cherished thee
With fondness little failing even his.
Have I not, Marinella?

Mar. You have—you have !

Lor. Then thou believest me, I've spoke the truth.

Mar. If thou say'st true, then it is true indeed !

Lor. 'Tis meet I should make known the nature of
This strange revealment : therefore, listen me :
Your father dying suddenly, confessed
To me a secret hitherto his own ;
That the Count Basil was not son to him,
But privately adopted, to supply the place
Of a male heir ;
For failing this, his title and estates
With all the wealth he meant for you as dower,
Had else been forfeiture to Venice State—
Here is the whole confession as 'twas made—

(*Showing parchments.*)

Your father's name appended, with his seal—
You see 'tis as I've said.

Car. (*aside.*) I'll have those documents
Ere I am eight days older.

Mar. It is—it is—alas ! poor Basil !

Lor. It was your father's latest wish and will
That you should know of this—that knowing it
You might treat Basil with such fair respect,
As duty owing to your proper lord
May counsel you.

Mar. Knows my lord aught of this ?

Lor. He nothing knows of it.

Mar. Or Basil ?

Cor. 'Tis only known to you and me.

Car. (*aside.*) And me, your reverence.

Mar. It is our duty, father, they should know it.

Lor. Our duty as it was your father's will—
And straight on their return they shall be told—
But let us farther walk—I would confer
And counsel you on this most heavy subject.

Mar. Poor Basil !

[*Exeunt R.*]

Car. (*coming down Stage.*) Now, by the crown of thorns,
'tis burning shame

For me, a noble gentleman of Venice,
Thus to be cornered, and perforce compelled
To play the listener ! State secrets, too !
A history of fraud and forfeiture.
It comforts me to know that these have oft
Seduced my betters from the path of honor ;
Another comfort springs from my mishap,
These goodly facts will make the Duke my friend—
And fill my slender purse with gold ducats ;
The Duke owes Casimir but scanty liking ;
And I do hate him in my inmost soul
For many crosses he hath cost my life—

The latest, bitterest, that but for him
I should have had the sole and whole command
Of this great enterprise against Milan.
My hate for him is only equalled by
My burning lust for her:
If I could make him suffer in his wife
'Twould be a sweet revenge!
'Tis plain she loves him not: she said as much:
Her love was all safe lodged in brother Basil!
By all the saints! it is the strangest case
Of virtue I have met, and stranger still,
If from such chaos I do not clip out
A fortune fashioned so to suit myself:
But see! his reverence has ta'en his leave
And straightway makes she back!
Come, cap and feather, sit as you were wont!
There's virtue in you yet! Gods! such a walk—
As though the earth were proud to have her on 't!
Each step she takes, her knowing dainty foot
Flings back the pebbles with a spurning pride,
As though 'twas planted on a bleeding heart!
And when she smiles, the flowers ope their cups
To catch new fragrance! She is here!

Enter Marinella, R.

Good day, most gentle lady!

Mar. Good day! my lord, the Count Caraffa, I believe?

Car. The same, sweet lady, and your servitor.

Mar. It is a very lovely day.

Car. Lady,

The sun seems conscious that you are abroad;
He flings his fairest beam upon your path.

Mar. Your courtesy mistakes effect for cause—
'Tis for he shines so fair, I am abroad.

Car. Yet lady, on no fairer thing than thou,
Deigns he to shine to day.

Mar. My lord, is not this flattery? I do not like 't.

Car. Then you're a miracle and not a woman, (*aside.*)
No, lady, no: I never flatter.

Or if I did, no compliment of mine
Could flatter thee—a truce to this.

I play the postman for your ladyship;

This letter (*shows letter*) from the general, your husband,
Came with despatches for the Duke and Senate;
It brings glad news to you—your lord has won
A brilliant victory.

Mar. (*taking the letter.*) My lord, I thank you.

Car. Too happy am I, madam, thus to serve you.
I' faith she takes it coolly, with as much *sang froid*
As I would read the billet of a sempstress,
Or a coarse weaver's bill for gloves and hose!

No touch of trembling in her delicate hand—
 No bounding of the heart like one that loves!
 Bah! she cares not for him. Just bought and sold
 As I have heard—a legal prostitution;
 Then must she fall—it is as sure as—(*aside.*)
 What news, sweet lady? how is my lord?

Mar. My husband's well.

Car. "My husband's well!" By heavens, it seems
 To give her pain to say it; that's not strange.
 I've known a score of them whom it hath pained
 To say "my husband's well;" (*aside*) 'Tis rumored that
 The general will soon return;
 So says he, does he not?

Mar. The day beyond to-morrow.

Car. So soon as that? Comes your *brother*,
 Count Basil, with my lord?

Mar. He does.

Car. You'll be right glad to see your *brother* Basil,
 You were such friends of yore.

Mar. Yes—yes, my lord.

Car. I, too, had a sister—but she married
 And soon forgot me, I believe.
 You are unwell?

Mar. A momentary dizziness, my lord;
 I know not what.

Car. Yet you are pale—pardon me, (*taking her hand,*)
 I'll kiss that hand though I should hang for it;
 If that succeed, the lips will quickly follow: (*aside.*)
 Allow me to conduct you to the palace.

Mar. There is no need, my lord.

Car. Nay, may it please you, madam.

Mar. My lord, I'm well.

Car. Nay, madam, do permit me;
 I'll kiss the hand though it should burn my lips,
 For even now its soft and dainty touch
 Thrills like electric fire to my heart!
 Why should I fear? 'tis only fools
 And cowards that do fail in such a cause (*aside.*)
 Sweet lady—(*kisses her hand.*)

Mar. (*withdrawing it gently.*) My lord, you've made me
 well again.

Car. Ha! how?

Mar. Sir, you have made me well again.

Car. Can it be so that I have won her thus?
 Yes, so! they're all alike
 Since Adam had a wife! (*aside.*)
 Then, dearest lady, grant me—

(*Attempting to kiss her.*)

Mar. Villain! stand back!—my lord shall know of this,
 And punish you, believe me.

Car. The devil!

I did mistake this dame—
'Tis wiser to repair this breach again—
There's many a citadel safe proof 'gainst storm,
Will yield to bloodless siege—I'll try it thus—(*aside.*)
Nay, madam, you have punished me already.

Yet, lady, hear

A word that may extenuate my crime,
Perhaps vouchsafe forgiveness.
Since first I saw thy face, my soul was filled
With love of thee—oh! do not censure me—
With equal justice might the magnet stone
Condemn the steel that cannot help approach,
Than thou be angry with my helpless love.
'Tis thus I've erred, and thus I beg of thee, (*Kneeling.*)
My crime shall be forgotten.

Mar. Such rudeness, sir, can never be forgotten—
If you're a man, your conscience enough
Will punish you—let this be of the past,
But for the future, sir,

We may not meet again.

[*Exit L.*

Car. (Rising.) There you are much mistaken, let me tell
you—

We'll meet again at such a place and time,
As you'll not shun me with so cool a scorn:
The patient vigil of a heart that loves
With its whole love, and hates with all its hate,
Must sometimes reach its end; and I will risk
My life to compass this! Fool I have been—
My headlong haste has plunged me into hell;
And oh! from such a heaven to have fallen!
Revenge and gold must hide humiliation—
Gold and revenge! I'll make a solvent purse
Supply the place of an insolvent heart;
I've two friends left—the Devil and the Duke,
And both are powerful in Venice city.
The Duke loves Casimir no more than I.
Some olden quarrel
Hath bred between them hatred cordial—
I'll find an ally here—but lacking this,
'Tis plain that he must suffer in his wife—
She loves him not, and by the natural course
Of woman's heart, she must be false with some one;
Who knows who? perhaps the new ex-brother;
Ha! 'twould be a rich revenge.

Such men are best ill used
When wedlock's confidence has been abused.

[*Exit.*

ACT I.—SCENE II.

A Wood.

Casimir, (without) R. Breathe your steeds, gentlemen, while
from this hill
We view fair Venice smiling from the sea
A joyous welcome!

[*Enter with Basil, R. s.*
Brother Basil,

Is 't not a glorious sight?

Basil. It is, indeed, my lord!

Cas. More glorious than war!

Bas. Dost thou think so, my lord?

Cas. In very truth I do—a noble sight!

Look on it, Basil! was ever warlike show
So fair as this? "Here on the Adrian shore
The villa lifts above the orange groves
Its snow-white walls, that nestling seem to sleep
Along the golden outline of the leaves,
Like a pure virgin on her downy couch,
Whose soft rebelling bosoms have escaped
Concealment of the careless drapery!"
Up from the azure bosom of the deep
Aspiring walls with broad and bannered crests
Pierce the blue heaven! far as eye can reach
The wings of commerce whiten all the sea!
And nearer still, a thousand gondolas
With flags and gilded crests and joyous rowers,
Come bounding o'er the waves to bear us back
To our sweet sea-kissed home!
Ah! Venice, smiling city of the sea,
Thou art a picture for a poet's heart!
Look on it, brother! this the fruit of war?

No--no.

Such bright prosperity is born of peace—

War never nurtured Venice!

Bas. Pardon me, general, it seems somewhat strange
To hear you speak of war in such a fashion?

Cas. It may seem strange—from boyhood I have led
A soldier's life—and ever until now
The trumpet's flourish, and the war steed's neigh
Have been the sweetest music of my soul:
But I am changed of late—and but that duty
Summoned us forth to curb the Milanese,
I had not donned these trappings willingly.
From victory I never longed before
To head me home to Venice; now, in truth,
I yearn right much to see her.

Bas. Her? Whom?

I long to lay my laurels at *her* feet:

The sober city with our shows of war—
 I must endure it—that we may not fail
 In due respect, where most respect is due;
 Bear this before, (*gives letter*) and say the writer comes
 Close on its heels.

Bas. I will, good general; adieu! [*Exit Basil, s. H*]

Cas. Kiss Marinella, boy, and say the kiss
 Comes from her husband! Husband—do I dream?
 No—no, it is reality! and she
 My wedded wife—my own dear Marinella!
 Husband and wife! oh sweet and sacred sounds!
 In the vocabulary of the soul,
 There are no words of so endearing interest!
 No tie can e'er be wove around the heart,
 So sacred and so strong as that which binds,
 The loving husband to his loving wife!
 Oh! Marinella, how my bosom yearns
 For the fond pressure of thy lovely form!
 I'm yet but half thy husband—cruel fate
 That rudely tore me from thy soft embrace,
 Now brings me back—perchance that when we meet
 Our hindered honeymoon might be more sweet! [*Exit L. H.*]

ACT I.—SCENE III.

A Street—Grand Ovation and Procession of Troops.
Ovation.

Welcome back the heroes brave!
 From the fields of death and glory!
 Let their names for evermore
 Be remembered in our story.
 Joy! the deadly strife is over!
 Joy! the victory is won—
 Joy! the maiden greets her lover—
 Joy! the mother meets her son!
 Welcome back the heroes brave!
 Home returning.
 And to those who found a grave
 Give your mourning.

Enter Casimir from a gondola.

(*From L. H. enter Marinella, Basil, Lorenzo, Caraffa, Luigi.*)

Cas. My wife! my Marinella!

Mar. My lord!

Cas. Give me sweet welcome, wife—thus—thus—

(*Kissing her.*)

I sent a kiss to you—did'st give it, boy? (*to Basil.*)

Bus. My lord, you came so close upon the heels of it,
 I scarce had time.

Car. (*Aside.*) He's lying now—he kissed her sure
 As I'm a two legged thing—I had found time

Had I been bearer of so sweet a message.

Cas. Well—well—good Basil, you shall have forgiveness,
For though you are my Marinella's brother,
I'm jealous even of a brother's kiss—
So now, sweet love, receive it from myself—(*Kissing her.*)

Car. (*Aside.*) If you, my soldier, knew as much as I,
You might be jealous of a brother's kiss—
You'll find it out in time, perhaps.

Mar. My lord, we are in company.

Cas. Nay, these are comrades, dear.
Rough soldiers like myself.

Your pardon, my good father, do forgive me—
I did not note your presence until now.

Lor. My lord, I give you joy on your great victory!
It glads me much to see you safe again.

Cas. I know—I know it does, my good Lorenzo—
But say,

How did behave our little caged dove?
Pined she much for her absent mate?

Lor. She did, indeed, my lord.

Car. (*Aside.*) And you too lie, old greybeard.

Cas. Come, dearest, tell me—speaks he the truth?

Mar. Indeed, I did so, my good lord.

Car. (*Aside.*) Oh! heavens! Woman! Woman!

Cas. But not as I—no—no—you could not, love;

By night, by day, I've thought of thee alone;

Reclining in the silence of my tent,

Or charging with my squadrons on the foe!

The Milanese may thank *thee*, Marinella,

For easy terms of peace—

But that I hastened to return to thee,

I would have razed their city to the ground,

And driven the Visconti forth from Italy.

Car. (*Aside.*) Here's a confession, or I'm much mista'en,
Will help my purposes.

You heard him, sir? (*to Luigi.*)

Luigi. I did, my lord.

Car. Remember it—it may be worth your pains.

Luigi. I will, my lord.

Cas. Indeed, Milan has cause to thank you, love.

You've made

My steel as edgeless as a leaden wand.

In Casimir, you've spoiled a soldier, wife.

Mar. Nay, my good lord, not thus with truth accuse me,
You've proved yourself the soldier since we wed,
And won a brilliant victory.

Cas. I won a brighter one before we wed,
In winning thee. What say you, my good lords?

Car. (*Aside.*) "Methinks you count your chickens in the
eggs—

Take care, my brave, lest when the yolks be hatched,
Your birds may turn out beasts with horns upon them.

Mar. (*To Casimir.*) My lord, you make me blush
Before these gentlemen.

Cas. Nay, there's a constant blush upon thy cheek
That I would kiss again, and thus forever !
These blissful moments, how much sweeter they
Than the fierce joys of war !
How soft this snowy bosom when compared
With the rude pillow of the battle field !

Unless the foe
Himself should bring invasion on the State,
I'll go to war no more.

Car. (*Aside.*) I'm much mistaken, or you'll find enough
To keep your hands from idleness at home—
“ Enough, methinks, in looking to your wife—
Aye—aye—'tis all love now—enjoy it while you can—
Make the most of it. I never saw
A honeymoon of sweets that did not make
A life of bitters—kiss on—kiss on.”

Mar. My lord, your marching must have wearied you—
I pray you do come in; refreshment waits you.

Cas. My lords, I claim indulgence for awhile,
Till I have doffed this panoply of war.
'Twill glad me much to see you soon again.
Yet, ere we part, let me invite you all
In a less general and fictitious strain :
Say come on this day week, or morrow week ;
And let us make the day a holiday.
It might be sooner, but meanwhile I have
Some business with the State ; and as you know,
It is my honeymoon ; I do believe
That custom sanctions some slight selfishness
Upon such rare occasions.
To-morrow week, then be't ; adieu, my lords !
You'll find a welcome whensoever you come—
Adieu to one and all !

[*Exeunt.*]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.—SCENE I.

A Scene in Casimir's Palace.

Cas. (*discovered.*) Thus ends my soldier life—is sheathed
my sword—
Not all the glory the great Cæsar won
Should tempt it forth again !
Heaven is my judge I never drew 't,

Ambition urged in an unrighteous cause ;
The laurels I have plucked grew on the path
Of my strict duty ; now no more of war,
Its glory and its guilt !—the day will come
When those bright names, that like so many gods
Now glitter on the pages of the past
In blood-writ fame, shall be forgotten all ;
And in their stead, the good, the truly great
Alone shall be recorded !

Enter a Servant. L.

Serv. My lord, Father Lorenzo does desire
A moment's converse with you.

Cas. Admit the good father instantly. [*Exit Servant. L.*
Now, be 't my pride
To seek an honored excellence in peace—
I must not play the sluggard like my sword :
'Tis labor sweetens life, and toil to me
Has grown a worshipped thing.

Enter Lorenzo. L.

"He's busy with his thoughts, and by the smile
Upon his noble front they're happy ones ;
Oh ! must I change their sunshine, into sorrow ?
'Tis a sad duty, but if left undone
That little cloud that like a speck appears
On the far future, marked by me alone,
Might dark and darker grow, until the sun
Of his bright happiness is shadowed o'er,
Perhaps obscured forever !
My friendship and my duty urge me on—
My lord !"

Cas. (advancing.) Ah ! how fare you, good Lorenzo ?
You wish to speak with me ?

Lor. If it so please you now, my lord.

Cas. Most certainly ! upon what matter ?

Lor. One that is dear to you, my lord,
As is your life.

Cas. Ha ! as life ?
'Think'st thou, my good Lorenzo, that to men
There's aught so dear as life ?

Lor. To men like you, my lord, two things—
A wife and honor.

Cas. You're right—indeed I think for both—
Certes the first—you may say dearer—
Of these would you converse ?

Lor. It is my purpose as it is my duty.

Cas. Of one, or both ?

Lor. Of both, for both are one in this.

Cas. Both, I believe, are pure ?

Lor. As virgin snow—but 'tis upon the snow
That darkest shows a stain—

Cas. Speak on !

Lor. My lord,
The easiest and most effective cure
Precedes the malady—a remedy
Too rarely ta'en ; I come not to point out
A blot, but to preserve the purity
Of page now stainless.

Cas. That page is —— ?

Lor. The honor of your wife.

Cas. But that I know your holy privilege—
But that I have observed your well-tried friendship
For our late jointed houses—your words, good father,
Would make offence between us—
The bare suspicion that my wife *could* err
Can find no place within this bosom :
It must seek meaner shelter !

“ Marinella !

He who could doubt thee were unworthy thee.”

Lor. Hear me, my lord.

Cas. I'll hear you patiently, good father,
But do not couple doubt with her.

Lor. My lord, I do not speak of probable
But danger possible.

Cas. There's neither one nor other in this case.

Lor. My lord, when nature's human, there are both !

Cas. I cannot fancy nature more divine !

Lor. My lord, I came—

Cas. You came to counsel me, and I am here
To list your counsel, and to thank you for't—
So, good Lorenzo, pray at once proceed—
I'll hear you to the end !

Lor. Lord Casimir, scarce two months have passed
Since from these aged arms you did receive
As fair a bride as ever blushing stood
Before an altar :—

'T was on her sixteenth birthday that she wed—
It was her father's will that she should wed
So young, as so it was that you alone
Should marry her.

Cas. Your argument ?

Lor. My lord, within the centre of a grove
There stood a tree, by far more beautiful
Than those that grew around ;—that its fair form
Might not be longer hid, the owner came
And cut away the grove that sheltered it—
It was made manifest a stately tree—
The world saw and admired ; but jealous winds
Began to blow ; and its unpractised sinews

Could not withstand the tempest's fierce assault ;
Its green arms broke—its roots gave way—it fell !

Cas. Now—the application ?

Lor. My lord, you well remember
How, till her bridal morn, this maid hath passed
Her life ?

Cas. Well ?

Lor. All of the world she knew, was what is gleaned
Within the harmless range of rural life ;
If sin existed, nought knew she of it,
Except by books, or what the human heart
Itself conceives ; and hers was virgin pure—
“ As well the snow might gender its pollution.”
You married her—her simple dream was o'er—
You brought her to the gay and courtly city—
And freely now your palace doors are oped,
And every giddy gallant of the town
Hath access to your wife, her ear's assailed
With flattery—her woman's eye is fed
With forms of manly beauty—dost thou perceive
No danger in all this ?

Cas. No ! not a whit of danger.

Lor. You understand —— ?

Cas. I understand, but not admit the argument—
Had that rash husbandman
But taught his tree to grow ere he exposed it,
It would have baffled all the tempest's strength—
Though that my wife is but a child in years,
And in the usage of a guileful world,
Virtue is too deep rooted in her heart,
To be plucked forth by carnal conjuring—
I'll risk my soul on her fidelity !

Lor. My lord, be not too blind—
Pardon the boldness of an earnest friend.
I'm older than yourself—a wayward youth
Hath skilled me craftily in woman's heart.
And never since the first one guilty fell
Hath it been found invulnerable.

Cas. I'm sorry, my good father, your experience
Hath leapt to such conclusion—

T'would grieve me much did I believe it thus—

I have a higher faith
In that most fair and noble work of God—
And as for her, the fairest of her sex—
I would not, if I could, doubt Marinella.

Lor. My lord, it is not doubt, but simple prudence—
Had that rash husbandman, as you have said,
But taught the tree to grow ere he exposed it—
Had he but guarded it against the storm,
While its green boughs were gathering new strength

In each successive blast—

It would in time, unguarded and alone,
Have stood defying all the tempest's wrath—

I do not doubt the virtue of your wife

To be of strength unusual in her sex.

Who doubts the value of that diamond gem? [*Pointing to the
ring on Casimir's finger.*]

If worn with care the jewel still may last

A thousand thousand years, yet easily

That gem may be destroyed—heat it but slightly,

It will resist the flame—heat it still more,

It may resist; but fling it in the furnace,

And it will melt and be as valueless

As a poor pebble! So is't with woman's virtue!

Cas. Ah! no—not always so, my good Lorenzo—

I do believe her virtue sometimes is

More like the golden setting than the gem,

Which flung into the furnace but comes forth

More pure than ever!

The course you counsel me is plainly wrong.

Lor. Wrong, think you, my good lord?

Cas. I do, indeed—I'll prove it if you will—

And from this very diamond I will draw

My argument.

Lor. And how, my lord?

Cas. Answer me,

Wherein consists the value of this jewel?

Lor. Doubtless, my lord, in its

Incomparable brilliance.

Cas. You've answered right—

Where is its brilliance now? [*Covering the ring with his hand.*]

Lor. It hath no brilliance now.

Cas. It hath no value then! this jewel set

In its fair circlet, as you see it now,

Is full of value and an ornament

Upon my finger—now it is valueless

As a poor pebble!

My wife's a gem—a rare one all admit;

And you, forsooth, would have me, miserlike,

Shut up this precious jewel from the world,

Lest that the world's bawd gaze should tarnish it.

I tell you, fray Lorenzo, that the gem

That will not bear the wearing is not worth

The having of—my wife shall still go free!

“I'll trust her conduct to her own good head—

Her heart will be an ample guarantee.”

Lor. My lord, I have no more to urge;

You've had my counsel—let me take my leave.

Cas. Stay!

By heavens! you have made me somewhat jealous

Without a cause!

Lor. Not jealous, my good lord, I would not wake
The springs of that vile passion in your heart—
I do but warn your heart against a cause,
That such might ne'er exist.

Cas. I find no cause—what would you have me do?
Whom would you warn me of?

Lor. Of all, but most of all those who are dearest.

Cas. Ha!

Lor. Ask the poor broken hearted husband, who
Hath robbed him of his earthly joy, his wife—
And he will answer, 't was his dearest friend.
Ask the bereaved parents, who bereft them,
They'll answer you, it was their dearest friend—
And she the ruined one, he was *her* friend—
'Tis not the bold

And published libertine that men need fear;
For he hath rarely access to the hearth,
And only from the hearth can hearts be stolen.
The wolf comes in the aspect of a lamb,
And gains at once admittance to the fold—
He gains at once both confidence and contact,
For without these there is no guilty love—
Need I speak plainer?

Cas. You'd have me then suspect my dearest friend
Of plotting my dishonor?

Lor. No, not suspect; suspicion argues crime
And here as yet no crime has been committed.
I'd have your caution waked—the cause removed,
That else may lead to criminal effect.

Cas. The cause removed—that is, you'd have me lock
And bar my doors against the faces of
My friends?

Or is there, ha! is there a single cause?

Lor. Since you have put me to't, my lord, there is.

Cas. There is! and who?

Lor. It is a duty I would gladly shun;
But 't is a duty, and—

Cas. Then quick perform it, father!
For heaven's sake, keep me not
In this dread agony of painful doubt!
Who is he I should fear?

Lor. Count Basil!

Cas. Count Basil!

Lor. I've said—though doubtless at this time
Count Basil's innocent, as I myself,
Of wrong to you, or to your wedded wife,
Who knows what fate is in the womb of time?

Two youthful hearts

So lately joined by strange unnatural ties,
And late so rudely severed—now may yearn
To be united by a stronger bond—

Here nature rules, volition is her slave—
 The close communion of the common hearth ;
 His hourly access to her eye and ear,
 May bring about results most to be dreaded !
 I tell you, my good lord, that you do stand
 Upon a precipice of fearful depth !
 'Tis easy task yet from the giddy height,
 To take yourself away—no violence
 Need to be used—Count Basil's your lieutenant—
 Upon a thousand pretexts send him hence,
 If but awhile, until domestic ties,
 Habit, like thoughts—perhaps that holy pledge
 That binds the loving husband to his wife,
 Have closer wove and bound your souls together.

Cas. And thus in fear that others *might* do wrong,
 You'd have me do a guilty wrong myself ?
 Banish, on false and frivolous pretext,
 My truest friend, who scarce a month ago
 Stept 'twixt my life and danger ?
 In doing so you'd have me virtually
 To doubt the strength of virtue in my wife :
 I tell you, my good father, in this *doubt*
 There lies more bitter agony of thought
 Than in the known *reality* of wrong !
 Where there's no confidence there is no peace,
 And virtue's valueless that will not bear
 Such slight temptation !
 Though 't is a thought that oft hath humbled men ;
 You cannot rule a woman's heart to love—
 No ! you may conquer worlds, yet not control
 The secret throbblings of one little heart !
 What boots it if I locked her body up ?
 Her appetite would still be free as air :
 And I should be, for all my petty pains,
 The Moslem master of a thing enslaved !
 No, no, my good Lorenzo, I will not
 Turn Turk as yet—when you can teach me, how
 To lock the subtle soul up with the body,
 Then shall I listen to your counsel, father,
 'Till then, my wife goes free !

Lor. Enough ! my humble duty goes no farther ;
 My counsel has been vain, and heaven forbid,
 That future destiny should prove it worthy !
 No, rather may my zeal be thought too blind
 Than too prophetic—once again, adieu !

[*Going.*

Cas. A moment stay ! good friend, mistake me not ;
 Your counsel has been kindly, wisely meant,
 And though it harshly jars with mine own thought,
 Yet for the motive, take my heart-felt thanks !
 I do forgive you, for some bitter pangs,

Fresh started here—if time to come should prove,
That I have held her too infallible
The error done would sit upon my soul
As lightly then, as would suspicion now—
For either one would bring that soul to nought:
As for my wife, you are her sage instructor,
And have free access to her every thought:
You are free then, as is your generous will,
To guide and strengthen those good principles
You seem so much to fear. God prosper you!

Lor. Amen! my honored lord! [*Exit Lorenzo.* L. H.]

Cas. He hath waked a new string in my secret heart.
And though but gently touched, its quivering
Already makes harsh music in my soul!
But for his holy prompting, I should ne'er
Have cast my thoughts on issue so remote.
The father hath experience, it is said:
Deep skill in human, and in woman's nature.
The arguments he urged, though my soul loathes
To own't, are full of truth! now which is best
To give his counsel thought, and yield myself
Up to a groundless fear? this course implies
A doubt, and consequent admits the danger!
There is no danger—not a jot of it!
Oh Casimir! this dubious wavering
Betwixt suspicion, and confiding faith—
Is't worthy of thee—no! no more of it!
I'll clear at once my just and honest heart
Of all dishonest thoughts, until 'tis pure
As 't was an hour ago!
Can I do this? already here
There is a struggle 'twixt my sense and will,
In which the will is playing hypocrite!
It shall be so no more—come on then, truth!
I'll look you in the face!

Enter Marinella. R. H.

Truth I invoked and lo! 't is here indeed,
With such a look of heaven as would disarm
The fiend himself if meditating ill!
How fares my Marinella since the morn?

Mar. Ill, my good lord, that you so long
Have kept yourself away.

Cas. But a short moment, love, I've been
In converse with the good Lorenzo.

“And I have had some business with the state.

Mar. My lord, do you not too much business?
We have been lonely for your company.

Cas. Ah! do not chide me; my last act
Was one that will enable me, hereafter,
To give you all my time.

Mar. Pray, what was't, my lord ?

Cas. Try guess, sweet wife.

Mar. Indeed, my lord, I cannot.

Cas. Well I will tell it you. I did to-day
Hang up my sword.

Mar. My lord, you do so every day—
What is there in't ?

Cas. I speak in riddles, Marinella.
I will not vex you then, I only mean"
I am no longer General Casimir,
But a plain citizen—I have resigned
My office to the Senate.

Mar. Oh ! I am glad of that, right glad of it !
Though war is full of interest, my lord,
Yet it is full of danger, sometimes guilt.

Cas. Ah ! love, 't was thought of this and thee
That caused me use my victory of late
With so much moderation ; perhaps too much—
I have some cause to fear :
The Senate yet will censure me for it ;
The Duke 's my bitter enemy.

Mar. Oh ! say not so, my lord !

Cas. We will hope, love—but no more of it now ;
Let us be gay ! what news have you for me ?
You have not been alone ? you've seen no doubt
Some company to-day ?

Mar. Oh ! yes, the Duke Urbino has been here ;
The Della Strozzi, and Fonseca's wife
Have called to bid me well.

Cas. No other company ?

Mar. No, none.

Cas. Has Basil been at home to-day ?

Mar. Oh ! yes, he hath been with me all the day.

Cas. How have you passed the time ?

Mar. First we read Homer's Iliad you know ;
How I admire the old blind Bard of Scio ?

Cas. I too admire the poem—not the theme ;
It was a causeless war, the guilty fruits
Of an unholy love : Go on !

Mar. Basil read it me. He's very good in Greek ;
But we did miss your company, my lord,
For explanation of those warlike terms.

Cas. Could Basil not explain them ?
He is a soldier.

Mar. He said, not half so well as you.

Cas. Brave modest youth !

[*Aside.*

Mar. Of all the Grecian heroes, think, my lord,
Which one in my mind most resembled thee ?

Cas. I cannot guess ; Diomedes or Ajax ?

Mar. Not either one—pray, try again !

Cas. Not Menelaus with the wicked wife?

Mar. No—no!

Cas. Nor Thetis' son?

Mar. Not he.

Cas. The son of Peleus, then?

Mar. Yes—yes, the brave Achilles:

He was so valiant, yet withal so good.

Cas. And who was like to Basil?

Mar. You'll know I'll say, it was the hero's friend,
The young Patroclus.

Cas. And who, sweet wife, didst liken to thyself?

Mar. I thought not of myself.

Cas. I would not liken thee to any one
In all the poet's story—thy form is Helen's,
But thy soul 's unlike as heaven to hell!
The Sciote bard conceived no counterpart
For mine own Marinella!

Mar. My lord, 't is flattery!

Cas. No, No,
The tongue was never formed could flatter thee!
Oh! how her presence falls upon my heart
Like the soft dew upon the drooping flower—
Bathing with sweet refreshment, 'till my love
Has ta'en again the color of the rose!
No more——

[*Aside.*

Mar. My lord!

Cas. Well, Marinella?

Mar. Are you not absent in your thought?

Cas. Pardon me, love, if I did dreaming seem,
Thou wert the sweet ideal of my dream.

Mar. My lord, I pray you do come in,
'T is now the hour, and supper waits upon you.

Cas. Go in, sweet wife—I'll follow you anon.

Mar. Then tarry not, my lord, for if you stay
I'll count the moments while you are away!

[*Exit.*

Cas. How could I doubt this fair embodiment
Of all that is most fair? if there exists
In her pure soul a single thought impure
Then hell and heaven have been brought together.
There is a book writ by a witling scribe
Who boasted his wide knowledge of the world.
He says, that Eve was fairest and she fell,
And from it would deduce
That every woman is at heart a wanton—
I'll not believe the foul philosophy!
It is the slander of a silly scribe
Who travelled far to find a simple truth
He might have learned at home!
No—no—I'll not believe 't.
Guilt cannot harbor in a home like this,

And even suspicion of it were a wrong
 Worth great atonement !
 Away suspicion then ! let worst come worst
 With me shall be no doubt 'till crime come first.

[Exit.]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.—SCENE I.

Senate Chamber—Duke and Senate in Council.

Duke—My lords, ere we adjourn,
 It will be well to take some note of this :

This paper holds

An accusation of the gravest kind
 'Gainst a distinguished soldier of our army :
 Which, if 't be true, not only does concern
 The welfare and the honor of our State ;
 But must even reach the life of the accused.

If it be false,

Let the accuser suffer.

First Senator. Who brings the accusation ?

Duke. Count Julian Caraffa.

First Senator. And against whom ?

Duke. The general Casimir.

Second Senator. Let's hear the accusation.

Third Senator. Let it be read.

The Duke gives the paper to a Secretary, who reads :
 " I, Julian, Count Caraffa, do accuse
 The Frenchman General Casimir of treason
 Against the State of Venice.

If the Senate holds

*My charge as worthy, I do ready stand
 At their august disposal, to bring forth
 My witnesses and full specifications
 As proofs of this alledgement."*

Duke. How say you, lords, shall it be entertained ?

First Senator.—I say, for one, most certainly.

Second Senator. And I say yes !

Third Senator. And I.

Fourth Senator. And I.

Duke. Summon Count Julian Caraffa. (*To officer.*)
 [Exit officer.]

It is, my lords,

A charge of most grave import, and refers
 To our late enterprise 'gainst Milan—
 In which our interest has been betrayed
 By this weak treaty.

First Senator. This have we heard.

Enter Caraffa.

Duke. Count Julian Caraffa, your charge is held ;
And you have leave before this august Council
To specify in full. Proceed !

Car. I charge the General Casimir
With treason to the State—in this, that he,
In sole command of our late expedition,
Halted before the city of Milan,
Even at the open gates, when 'tis well known
That flushed with victory and late success,
He could have entered it without a blow.
And furthermore, that by weak armistice,
He did withdraw our army without cause,
Or cause but in himself, across the frontier ;
Leaving thus,

The ancient foe of Venice unsubdued.

First Senator. Have you full proofs of this ?

Car. His own confession.

First Senator. Who witnessed it ?

Car. The gentleman Luigi, and a score
Of others, officers and gentlemen.
Besides his own confession, I have proofs
Enough i' the army—all condemn him for 't.

Second Senator. When can you bring your proofs ?

Car. When it may please the august seignory.

Second Senator. Suppose to-morrow, my good lords ?

Duke. Be it to-morrow, then—and for to-day,
Let me propose adjournment. *[Exeunt Senators.]*

Duke and Caraffa remain.

Duke. You're certain, my lord count, you heard all this ?

Car. As plain, my lord, as ever I have heard
The bells of good Saint Mark's.

Duke. 'Tis welcome news. I've longed this many a day
To have a charge on him—this were enough
To hang a dozen generals like him.
But for his tampering treasonable peace,
The Duchy of Milan would now have been
A province of our State. How came the fool
To prate about it ?

Car. 'Twas to his wife he made a boast of it—
Methinks he was beside himself with love.

Duke. I've heard it said this wife is wondrous fair.

Car. In my judgment,
There's none so fair in Venice.

Duke. Your judgment's good, lord count. Doubtless you
know
If she be virtuous as well ?

Car. 'Tis said, my lord, she is,
Beyond temptation.

Duke. Ah! that's not likely! Well, I must see
This paragon of beauty and of virtue.
But come—let us be home—you're with me, count—
Come dine with me.

Car. My lord, I'll follow in a breath. [Exit Duke.]
So my revenge goes well—now for my love,
Which is the strongest passion of my soul!
There am I crossed again, for it is plain
She'll wanton with this whelp—her foster brother.
Their early ties were scarcely snapped apart,
Till in their stead sprung up

A flame of love, like to the fabled tree,
That burns where it is broke!
I've seen it in their eyes a hundred times,
While he the soldier, husband-like, is blind
As bats and moles.
As yet they're baby innocent, but love
Full soon will teach them cunning.
Instinct will teach it her;
It is a devil's gift with all her sex—
Fiends! to be baffled thus by a cross love—
For I do burn for her within my bones;
But how proceed? let me reflect awhile—
My secret of the brother still is safe,
And I must try its power upon her fears—
There's virtue still in this—for I have known
Weak fear succeed where strongest love hath failed.
It shall be tried. For I will waste my life,
Or both shall fall—the husband and the wife!

[Exit.]

ACT III.—SCENE II.

Enter Casimir and Servant.

Cas. There is no halting now—
The journey is begun—the rugged road
Of doubt now lies before—it shall be trod,
And soon.

Send the good father to me!

[Exit Servant.]

The proverb says no rose without its thorn—
The fairest on the thorn most dangerous.

If then beneath

The rose that I have plucked there lurks a thorn,
There will be so much poison in its pricking,
That death will follow quick upon the wound.
Oh! these are bitter thoughts! my soul is filled
With arguments that like opposing waves
Drive reason to and fro—but yesterday

No happiness in Venice equalled mine—
And now who feels one half my misery ?

Enter Lorenzo, L. H.

Ah ! father, you have come—'tis well !
You may resolve me of one doubt at least,
And I must be resolved—I would not live
Another day in such a dread suspense,
To wear the Ducal crown—since yesternight
Mine eyes have known no sleep—but like a bark
High tossed upon the waves, my harrassed soul
Has toiled upon a sea of agony !
You've launched me on that sea without a chart—
Give me an anchor then, for my proud soul
No longer lives in this uncertain storm—
Give me a hope at once, or give me death !

Lor. My lord, all's well !

Cas. I must be satisfied that all is well.

Lor. You have no cause to doubt it, my good lord.

Cas. I hope no cause, and yet a cause I fear :

I have observed some signs of change of late :
Absence of mirth—a paleness unexplained—
A slight confusion when their eyes have met :
These might have passed unmarked, but for the theme
Of our late converse.

Lor. It is but fancy, my good lord.

Cas. That *fancy* then hath caused my heart more pain
Than all the *real* it hath ever known—
And for that very pain I'll know the truth ;
It cannot be more bitter ! Answer me :
For you and you alone can tell me this,
And answer me, as though your life and soul
Depended for their safety on the truth—
Say—has she ever loved me ?

Lor. My lord !

Cas. I know that she has given me
Such love as women lavish on their lords,
Whom chance or destiny has joined them to—
'Tis sometimes friendship—sometimes only fear—
I might, I think, without much vain conceit,
Lay claim unto the first.
But if 't be only that—

Have I been loved ?

Lor. My lord, how should I know ?

Cas. You're her confessor—through her whole life have had
Full knowledge of her thoughts.

Lor. 'Tis true—but love's a thought
Not always the confessional can reach.
How should I know ?

Cas. Give me your thoughts, then ?

Lor. I think, my lord, you've been as fully loved
As is the lot of the majority.

Cas. Which simply means I've not been loved at all.
Now, am I satisfied !

Lor. Not so, my lord !
Since you have conjured me to speak the truth,
I would have said, I think, her love for you
Was not that violent and o'erwhelming passion
That o'ersteps duty—but a love as true,
And of as high a value—a pure love
That fairly nurtured, strong and stronger grows,
Till habit makes it firm as adamant.
'Twas knowing this I counselled you to caution ;
Not that I feared a meditated ill—
But nature, strangely erring in this case,
Had given cause for prudence at the least :
'Tis not too late—as yet there's nothing done.

Cas. As yet there's nothing done ?
What signifies that there is nothing *done* ?
If there be something *thought* ? 'tis not the act
Alone that makes impure, but the conception of 't.
A woman may be faithless to her lord,
With but a word, a look, a thought, aye ! false
As if she had committed that which is
Too gross for utterance !

It is not what is *done* !

Lor. My lord, you have no evidence, as yet,
That you have suffered wrong even in *thought*.
They were but fancies you have late observed,
Such as a mind, like yours, unused to wiles,
Would conjure up : pray do not think of them !
But listen to the counsel I late gave :
Send the Count Basil hence
Upon some expedition of the State.

Cas. And think'st thou, father, I could e'er consent
To hold my heart in such vile vassalage ?
To hold hers by a tenure so unsure ?
Tenant at will,
To be ejected by the first rude chance !
No ! I must have a lease without a flaw—
A lease of love that only ends with life.
What were possession worth upon such terms
As you propose ?

Lor. And hold we life by tenure more secure ?
My lord, with equal justice you may stand
Before the cannon's mouth, when 'tis discharged,
Or have your heart impaled upon the sword,
Without the certainty of losing it !
Reject those fancies of the fatalist,
And be yourself the master of your destiny !

Cas. I'll first be master of its dangers, father—
If it be dark, the sooner comes the cloud
The shorter the suspense: the prisoner who waits
The sentence that may take away his life
Feels far more poignant suffering, than he
Who is condemned already—'tis the change
The passing from bright hope to dark despair,
That sharpens suffering—while with despair alone
The edge of pain grows duller, and we may look
More lightly upon death!

Lor. My lord, you argue wrongly; many men
Have safely passed through dangers unawares,
Which perils had they known, without a doubt,
They would have perished by.

Cas. But I *do* know there's danger in my path;
My purpose is to fathom its extent—
'Tis only cowards, father, who do shrink
From knowledge of to come—be't good or ill
There is a fascination in the end
That leads us on to it, as he who stands
Beside the precipice, is lured to plunge
Into the abyss, from very fear of falling!
You said I stood upon a precipice—
You spoke the truth, yet ere I now recede
I must look down into the depth below.

Lor. Rash man, beware!—tempt not your fate
If you should fall—

Cas. 'Tis better fall than stand in fear of falling!

Lor. If you should fall—yourself have been
The maker of your destiny. [Exit.

Cas. No, she has never loved me—bitter thought—
A willing father—an obedient child—
Oh! misery, had I but thought of this,
I might have shunned thee still!
But how act now? as he would have me? No!
What! thus to play at love's diplomacy
With mine own wife?—now jealous—now secure—
To lock her up at will—to let her forth
But when I can be nigh to spy on her?
To bar my doors up against every one
Who wears a handsome face? drive from my house
My best and truest friend, my more than brother?
Far sweeter were a life without a love,
Than such a love as this!

No! let the jealous Greek
Who gladly took his wife back, secondhand,
Make compromise in such intriguing terms—
I'll have no jealousy—the proofs of broken faith
Shall be the speedy harbingers of death.

[Exit.

ACT IV.—SCENE I.

PALACE GARDEN—*Enter Caraffa.*

Car. I think 'tis time my thievish knave had come;
 If he but get the papers all is safe.
 By this she is alone—and should she fail
 To take her daily walk,
 In her own dainty chamber shall I seek
 This saintly dame—force now must be my friend—
 I've tried all wiles, and proved her double proof.
 By Janus, here's my thief,
 And with a conqueror's smile upon his face—[*Enter Giacomo.*
 Well, Giacomo, you've got them?

Gia. I have, my lord. [Gives Papers.]

Car. The very documents—but of the lords?
 When went they hence?

Gia. An hour ago, my lord.

Car. The devil's luck! they may return full soon;
 And your lady, think you she will come forth?

Gia. Immediately, my lord; now as I passed
 I saw my lady making preparation
 To take her daily walk.

Car. Good! You may begone—I'd speak with her;
 Go hide yourself; you shall be well rewarded.

Gia. My lord, I'll trust to you. [Exit Giacomo.]

Car. Now all goes smoothly on—she'll soon be here:
 By Jove, it is a fitting place for love
 Among these blooming roses; such a spot
 As Jove himself would choose to spend an hour in
 In dalliance with his Leda—ha! she's here!
 My blood is boiling, and my giddy brain
 Reels at the thought, that heaven is so near! [Retires watching.]

Enter Marinella.

Mar. I do remember when Lord Casimir
 First came to woo me, he too then was sad;
 And when I asked him of his reason, said,
 I would not think of *him* when I was wed—
 I would not love him as I'd done before—
 'Tis true I do not feel for him the same—
 It is another feeling fills my heart,
 So strange and undefined, 'tis like a dream;
 At times I almost wish he were away,
 And yet I am unhappy when he's gone?
 Oh! no, it cannot be that guilty love,
 The good Lorenzo counselled me against:
 It cannot be, no—no; it *must not be*!
 For since I may not love him as a brother,
 I must not—dare not love him as another!

Car. (*Coming down.*) Sweet lady, you seem somewhat sad,
For such a blithesome morn? Mayhap I may
Console your ladyship?

Mar. My lord, I know not why
You have intruded on my path again—
It shall be better guarded for the future. [*Going.*]

Car. (*Stopping her.*) First, madam, would I speak a word
Meant for your private hearing.

Mar. There's nothing private, sir, 'twixt you and me :
You have already sacrificed respect.

Car. Then madam, 'tis your turn
To make a sacrifice—upon love's altar.

Mar. Sir!

Car. To be plain with you,
I'd hold communion with those coral lips.

Mar. My lord, permit me to return.

Car. Not 'till you've looked into these documents :
This is the title deed of an estate
Upon the Brenta : doubtless you know where ?
This the confession of its lord, your father,
Which says, his son is not his son ;
You understand ?

Mar. That you have stolen them ? I do.

Car. No matter how acquired—they now are mine.

Mar. Well sir, keep them ! what matters it to me ?

Car. This, madam,
That I do love you with as fierce a love,
As ever burned in an Italian's breast ;
That I have here the power ere sunset falls
To strip the baby Basil and yourself,
Of every ducat in your father's will :
Now in exchange for it, if you but smile
On my devoted love—if you but yield—
These documents shall be destroyed, e'en now
Before your face.

Mar. Base thieving villain ! shallow as the trick
Thy monstrous heart conceived !
Think'st thou we meant to keep what was not ours ?
The documents which you have meanly filched
To-morrow had been placed in the Duke's hands.
You, sir, yourself may bear them to him now ;
You, such a famous postman !

Car. 'Then if this move you not, still further hear ;
Your husband's life——

Mar. My husband ! name him not ; if he were here
You dare not look upon his face and live !

Car. Know, that your husband's life is in my hands.

Mar. How, sir ?

Car. He is accused of treason to the State.

Mar. Base thief, 'tis false ! treason could not exist
Within the heart of Casimir !

Car. 'Tis true, and I
Am the sole witness can condemn him.
If you but love me then, sweet Marinella,
Your husband shall go safe.

Mar. This is a shallow lie that you have told—
And if 't were true, my lord would rather die
Than I should barter but a single kiss
With such a wretch to save him!

So, sir, let me pass!

(*Going.*)

Car. Never! till I have satisfied my love!
You need not frown, nor pout. I am not come,
Believe me, to be scorned a second time.
You need not scream—there's no one near—
We'll not be interrupted!

Mar. Villain! stand from my path!

Car. Nay not so fast, sweet devil! first a kiss—

(*Attempting to kiss her.*)

Another, and—

Mar. (*Escaping from him.*) Oh! heaven protect me! ho!
within—help! help!

Basil! my lord! Lorenzo! help!

Enter Casimir and Basil, L.

Car. The fiends!

Cas. Am I awake? or is it all a dream?

Am I in Venice or among the Turks?

Foul castaway of God, who are you? Ha!

My lord, the Count Caraffa!

Does your lordship mistake my palace for

A Burdel? my garden for the street? my wife—

What does it mean? Speak, Marinella.

Mar. That that base wretch, my lord, has vilely dared—

Cas. Enough!

Bas. (*Drawing his sword.*) Draw, sir! (*to Caraffa.*)

Cas. No, boy, this quarrel's mine—see you to her;
Conduct her in.

This is my privilege—a husband's arm

Should always be the foremost to avenge

His wife's insulted honor!

[*Exeunt Bas. and Mar.*]

Now, sir, have you a sword?

Car. See for yourself!

Cas. You cannot draw 't too soon, if you would not
Be butchered like a dog—you wish, no doubt,
To die a gentleman—you are not one;
But by the common fashion *recognised*,
We'll give you leave to die as such—Draw!

Car. My lord, I see you're thirsting for my life—
Perhaps when you have heard what I do know,
You'll turn your sword against a nearer friend.

Cas. Fiend, what dost thou know?

Car. Though I have played the part of Sextus here—

Your wife is not Lucretia in the game—
She's false to you at least—Count Basil knows.

Cas. Liar and dog!

(They fight a few passes. Casimir runs him through.)

Car. Curses on you!—be furies in your life!
'Tis true, Lord Casimir, she's false—she's false.

Cas. Upon the brink of hell thou liest, accursed fiend!

Car. Go home, my cuckold lord—go home—go home!
You'll find Count Basil in her warm embrace.

Oh! oh! curses—false—false—

[Dies.]

Cas. Slave doubly damned, thou diest with a lie
Upon thy lips to give thee pass to hell!

Was it a lie? Could this fiend speak the truth?

If there be truth in man, it should appear

At such a time! but be they true or false,

His words have plunged me in a fiercer hell

Than that to which I've sent his guilty soul!

"Your wife was false to you, and with Count Basil."

Accursed fiend, I say again thou liest!

And if my eyes informed me of such truth,

I'd tear the senses forth for mocking me!

Oh!

Enter Lorenzo.

Lor. My lord, what hast thou done?

Cas. I slew that wretch, who would have wronged my wife;
Who told me ere he died, that she was false
With the Count Basil.

Lor. He lied!

Cas. You're sure he lied? I conjure you as you do love your
life
To speak the truth—you're sure he lied?

Lor. As my soul lives, I do believe he lied;
He was an idle braggart, my good lord,
Whose word in Venice, spite of his high place,
Was not worth half a ducat.

Cas. Yet with these bitter words
The wretch breathed forth his last!

Lor. It is not strange, and only proves
Him the more hardened villain; many times
Beneath the axe, its edge upon their necks,
Have lesser villains boasted of their crimes
And died most unrepenting.

Cas. Ha! I had forgot! how came he then
To know that she was not Count Basil's sister?
Not knowing this, he would not then—

Lor. My lord, he knew all this; by some foul means
He gained possession of those documents.
They're even now upon him.

Cas. *(taking the papers from Caraffa.)* True—true!

Lor. Besides, my lord, as you yourself do know,

He bore a rooted enmity to you,
And 'twas in vengeance he hath thus declared.

Cas. I never did him injury.

Lor. Your smiling fortune injured him.
He envied you, but envied most of all
Your rich possession of so fair a wife,
Whom he did love with all that fierce desire
That burns within the breast of lustful man—
A passion, my good lord, whose fearful strength
Hath oft unseated reason.

Cas. I nothing knew of this!

Lor. Nay more, what I have lately heard—
This monster once before
Did offer insult to your noble lady;
Which she with such high dignity repelled
As bred within him purpose of revenge.

Cas. Oh! damned villain!

Lor. These things from prudent motives she concealed
Save from myself;
Then think'st thou that an enemy like this—
A fiend who had not one redeeming gift—
Is like be pleased to die, at your sword's point,
With truth upon his lips to comfort you?

Cas. Father, I thank you for those soothing words!
Still there is doubt—one course alone is left!
Mine eyes themselves shall be my witness proof—
I'll watch each action with the tiger's stealth
Till I am satisfied!
I care not that the sight may strike me blind,
If I look on the act!

Lor. My lord, this course is wrong--unworthy of
Your noble nature.

Cas. Admit it wrong; there is no other left!

In such a case as this
Our judgment is dethroned--the senses are
The only proofs can ever satisfy
A doubting husband's heart! If I prove wrong
Name not the measure of my just atonement;
This heart will do more penance at the shrine
Of outraged confidence, than ever heart
Before conceived! I'll square me up with faith!

Lor. Oh! heaven grant
That there be need for such a reckoning!
My lord, Count Basil comes, I take my leave.

[Exit.]

Enter Basil.

Basil. My lord, I come to bid farewell to you.

Cas. Farewell!

Bas. Yes, my good lord, I have resolved
To leave you for a while.

Cas. And whither goest thou, Basil?

Bas. To France, my lord.

Cas. Can it be that he fears detection,
And guilty flies—down—down suspicion! (*aside.*)
Is not your going somewhat hasty, Basil?

Bas. I have been bent on it some time, my lord.
I would not waste my youth's best blood
In idleness, which I must haply do
Remaining here in Venice.

Cas. Why hast thou chosen France?

Bas. I wish to draw my sword in France's cause
Against our natural foe, the Austrian:
Besides, the land of France is dear to me
By many ties; it was
My father's—foster father's native land:
'Tis yours, my lord.

Cas. 'Thou hast chosen thy service well;
And now before you leave us come again,
That I may give you letters to King Francis,
With such report from me, your latest general,
As may be need for your more sure advancement.

Bas. My lord,
It is the very favor that I meant
To sue you for.

Cas. Slight favor, boy! You'd bid farewell
To Marinella? She is within. [*Exit Basil, R.*
'The time hath come to pluck this damning doubt
Forth from my heart, and plant within its place
Either the deadly poison of despair,
Or happiness an angel's self might envy!
If there hath ever passed an act of love
Between him and my wife, it will appear
At this leave taking, and myself shall be
A witness of't. Oh! Casimir!
Where—where is all that noble nature now
For which men honored thee? The veriest slave
That feeds upon my bounty, now may claim
More nobleness than I. Oh! I do call
All heaven to judge I cannot help myself;
This opportunity ne'er offers more;
And should I pass it now, the doubt would still
Live in my heart, and like a poisoned thorn
Keep rankling there for life. Enough! I'll go! [*Exit.*

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.—SCENE I.

CHAMBER IN CASIMIR'S PALACE.—*Enters Marinella.*

Marinella. My fears are now confirmed, and I have found
 The secret of my heart—'tis idle now
 To play the hypocrite, with mine own thoughts:
 In vain I try to banish from my breast
 Those feelings strange—they but return again—

Oh! I am lost!

Yes—lost to happiness, but not to honor.
 This heart shall cease to beat
 Ere it prove false unto the sacred vow
 That binds me to my lord—What do I say?
 Am I not false already? Swore I not
 Upon my bridal morn to *love* my lord?
 I did—I did! I call to witness heaven,
 Before whose presence it was registered,
 That I knew not the nature of that oath!
 The secret and the suffering be mine,
 Mine, mine, alone! let it be buried here.

Oh! would that he

Would seek a home in some far distant land,
 That we might never meet on earth again!
 How if I made my secret known to him
 And from his generous heart claim in return
 This sacrifice?—it shall be done!

*Enters BASIL. L.**Basil.* Good day, my lady!

Marinella. "My lady"—How cold he speaks to me. [*Aside*
 Good day, Count Basil!

Bas. I came to take my leave of you.*Mar.* Leave! what means't thou, Basil?

Bas. I purpose leaving Venice—
 I come to bid farewell to you.

Mar. Can he have known my thoughts
 Thus to anticipate my latest wish?
 And whither goest thou, Basil?

[*Aside*

Bas. To France; I go to join
 The army of her king.

Mar. The very course I would have counselled him.
 How easy is this parting hour to him—
 Oh! little knows he what it costs this heart
 To say farewell to him.

[*Aside*

This is a sudden resolution, Basil—
 How long, think'st thou, wilt thou be gone?

Bas. I cannot tell how long—perhaps forever.*Mar.* Forever!

Bas. 'Tis better far I never should return.

Mar. Ha ! thou speakest strangely—evil fortune
Has sure befallen : May I not know it, Basil ?
My lord will be your friend, and so will I.

Bas. Thanks, thanks !—
It is an evil fortune where no friend
Could bring relief.

Mar. Basil, you make me sad—there was a time
When you would have confided this to me.

[*Enters Casimir, listening.*

Bas. Shall I go forth, my exile unexplained,
As though I had committed some gross crime
I dare not tell to her, who all my life
Has been the echo of my every thought ?
She shall know all—the secret will not stay
A moment longer in my bursting heart.
But promise to forgive me, I will speak
The cause of my departure ?

[*Aside.*

Mar. Forgive you, Basil !
I know you would not give me such offence,
As might require forgiveness.

Bas. It is—that I do love you, Marinella,
Not with that sweet affection, I once felt,
But the strong passionate love that lovers feel.
Oh ! do not censure me—as I do live
The fault rests not with me—reproach me not—
For I have erred but with a helpless fate.

Mar. Since it is thus, Count Basil, it is well—
You have resolved, in leaving Venice, well.

Bas. For the dear friendship of our youthful years,
I could not thus go forth upon the world
And leave to you such action unexplained.

Mar. And is it fair since he hath thus disclosed
That I should play the hypocrite, and hide
My heart from him ? my cup of misery
Is far less bitter now to bear than his !
It shall not be ! no, let the dregs be mixed
That both may share their equal bitterness !
There is no wrong ! it is to him alone
That it may lighten oft his long lone hours
Of absent life ; I cannot help myself ;
I must speak out, (*aside.*) Basil !

Bas. Madam ?

Mar. I too have found a secret, I have longed
Much to disclose to you.

Bas. To me ?

Mar. To you alone. I need not ask of you
That it be kept a secret from the world :
'Twas half my purpose, ere you told your love,
To make this strange confession,

And from your generous heart to ask of you,
What you've already purposed,
That we should part to meet no more on earth—
'Tis what I would have asked, as the return
Of my unhappy love!

Bas. Your love? for me? is't possible?

Mar. Alas!—alas!

Bas. Oh! Marinella, do not tell me this!
Oh! fatal destiny, all, all undone!
I thought the misery was mine alone,
But you too now must share it, and perchance
Lord Casimir—

Mar. No—never, Basil!

Be it our sacrifice as 'tis our secret—
If we've been guilty in this hapless love,
Let us make such atonement as we may;
Though in this life we cannot rule our hearts,
I am at least the mistress of my will
As you of yours art master—we'll use their power
To save our honor and *his* happiness.

Bas. We will!

Mar. Let us forever part.

Bas. Forever!

Mar. Go forth upon the world—a life of change,
If it should not destroy this hapless flame
In time—

Bas. Oh—never, never!

Mar. Hope, Basil, hope.

For me, be it my struggle to forget you.

Bas. Oh! cruel fate!

Mar. My only joy will be to cherish *him*,
With duty that will rival love itself:
And though the smiles I wear belie my heart,
'Twill break ere I betray it!

Bas. Oh, noble Casimir!

'Twould break his heart to know of this.

Mar. He never shall! Surely there is no guilt
In such hypocrisy, whose only end
Is my lord's happiness.

Bas. Oh! Marinella, would that you could love him!

Mar. Perhaps in after years.

Bas. In after years?

Mar. The friendship I now feel may turn to love:
So said Lorenzo—I am little skilled
In the heart's history.

Bas. Heaven make it so!

Mar. And now farewell forever!

[*Exeunt Marinella R. Basil L.*]

Casimir. (*Comes down the stage.*) There's no revenge in this!
In any case, the wronger's blood

Is but poor medicine to heal the heart
Of him who has been wronged.

That parting scene

Hath robbed my dagger's point of all its power—

Unless that I should turn it on myself—

Perhaps 'twere better so—this wedge of steel,

In passing through my heart, could not inflict

Within its bleeding strings one half the pang

I feel already!

Now there's but one course left for me—to die!

The rose-wreathed pedestal on which I stood

Is crushed beneath my feet; and I have fallen

Amidst the wreck of thorny desolation!

But how to die? By this? by poison? No!

I will not have it writ

Upon my epitaph, that I did die

The death of fools and cowards! Casimir!

Thou shalt not leave thy foes so fair a mark

To aim their slanders at.

Thank heaven! there is a worthier, often sought

By those like me, poor bankrupts of the heart,

A soldier's death! yes—yes, it shall be mine—

Come to my thigh again! (*taking his sword*.)

With thee, old friend, I go to seek my grave

Where death assumes its most alluring aspect—

On the battle field!

Enter Basil, hastily.

Bas. My lord, fly, fly! your enemies are now
Decreeing your destruction!

Cas. That, by my friends, has been decreed already.

Bas. The Duke and Ten determine on your death.

Cas. I have myself determined on my death.

Bas. Hear me, my lord; this moment as I went
Unto the council chamber to surrender

These to the Duke, (*showing papers*.) I overheard a scene—

Cas. And I too, Basil, overheard a scene
Hath caused this heart more poignant agony
Than all the vengeance of the Duke and Ten
Of torture could inflict!

Bas. My lord, what can you mean?

Cas. I will not rack thy brain with riddles now—
I've been for the last hour within this chamber.

Bas. Heavens! can it be so? My lord, I do confess;
Denial or defence I cannot make;
If thou decreest my death, I'm ready now
To die.

Cas. Not half so ready, sir, as I—
Think you I meant to slay you, gentle sir?

Bas. It is your right; my life is yours;
Take it, for I am weary of it now!

Cas. Oh! Basil—Basil—how I loved you, boy!
Words have no power to speak how I have loved you—
My home, my heart, my fortune, all were yours!
You might have drawn upon me for my life,
I would have given it willingly,
All, all, but that!

Bas. (kneeling.) Spare me, my lord!
Here is my sword, and here my naked breast—
Take it—take forth my life, but wound me not
With your too just reproach.

Cas. Put up thy guilty weapon, boy!
Within the bitter cup that I have drunk
There's not one drop of vengeance!

Bas. Oh my too generous lord!
My lord! (*Pointing out.*)

Cas. She, too, poor bird!—Retire a while,
I'd speak with her alone—but leave us not.
I do entreat you stay a moment in
The vestibule.

[*Exit Basil. L. H.*]

Enter Marinella. R. H.

Cas. Marinella!

Mar. My lord?

Cas. Why do you start?

Mar. Your voice, my lord, was sudden—
I knew not you were here.

Cas. We are about to lose a most dear friend:
Basil intends to leave us for a while:
You've seen him—have you not?

Mar. I have my lord: he has this moment been
To bid farewell to me.

Cas. No doubt you will feel sad
At his departure?

Mar. Yes—sad, indeed—(*aside.*) I do my lord.

Cas. 'Tis natural at parting with a friend;
One so endeared as Basil was to you.

Mar. Would he would speak upon some other theme! [*Aside.*]

Cas. I too regret the cause,
That carries him away from us.

Mar. The cause, my lord!

Cas. Oh—yes, he goes to France
To better his condition—when I learnt
The true cause of his leaving I did wish
He might remain with us; 'tis not too late,
And I shall use entreaty to this end.

Mar. No, no! my lord

Cas. No? why not?

Mar. Why, that I would not see him lose so fine
An opportunity of winning fame
And fortune too—let him proceed, my lord!

Cas. Oh! noble sacrifice of a pure woman's heart!
Marinella?

Mar. My lord?

Cas. I have a tale for you.

Mar. What is't, my lord? (*They sit.*)

Cas. Far from the echoes of a troubled world,
Within the soft embrace of vine-clad hills,
There lay a sunny vale; in whose warm lap
Had art divine and nature more divine
Poured out their wealth in very wantonness!
A valley of bright fields and emerald groves,
Above whose glowing foliage lordly towers
Rose to the sapphire sky! upon the ear
There fell no sounds that were not musical—
The songs of birds and bees and falling waters,
The voice of Nature's God, as soft and sweet
As when it thrilled through earth's first Paradise!
The winds were never rude—No storms came here,
Alone the breeze from the blue Appenines
Stole softly down among the perfumed trees,
Filling the air with incense!
It was indeed a scene of loveliness

And over all

Hung a rich canopy of blue and gold—
The sky of Italy!

Mar. Oh! sweet, sweet scene—how like our own dear home!

Cas. Within this vale,
A maid of noble lineage had been reared;
She was indeed the ideal of her sex:—
The bright embodiment of love itself!
Of form so lovely, so divine a face,
It seemed as if the spirit of the place
Had gendered her, from out its glowing flowers,
To make the picture perfect!

Mar. How beautiful!

Cas. This maiden had a brother, a brave youth;
Her father too still lived, a good old man,
The sole possessor of all these fair scenes
'Midst which they dwelt in innocence and peace,
Unclouded as their skies!

A stranger came, from a far distant land,
And sought this quiet vale—he soon became
Its owner's welcome guest—companion of
The maiden and her brother;
He was their elder, yet had never loved,
For his young days had all been rudely spent
Within the camp, or on the battle field—

But the rare beauty of this glowing maid
Soon made its image on his yielding heart:
And he did love, as only they can love,

Whose youth's and manhood's flame have both been blent
Into one burning passion !

He was not skilled in love's diplomacy,
And knew not even how to woo the maid—
He told the good old father of his love,
Who wooed and won her for him :

They were wed.

She then was but a child and ill could know
The nature of her vow ; but the old lord
Fearing a malady that vexed him much,
Desired thus soon to see his daughter wedded.
Close on the bridal morn the father died
So suddenly, that there was no one near,
Save his confessor, whom he gave in charge
Confession, that the youth whom all the world
Supposed his son, and brother of the maid,
Was not his son, nor yet the maiden's brother !

Mar. How strange, my lord, how like—

Cas. Nay, hear me, Marinella, to the end—
This sad confession was made known to all
The stranger lord, the maiden, and the youth ;
But they had grown together three such friends,
They would not part, but lived like as before
In the sweet commune of the common hearth !

Now grows my tale more sad :

In time, the maiden found within her heart
A feeling undefined, which never yet
Had centred there, or only as a dream :
It soon became developed—it was love !
Love not for him whom she had vowed to love,
But for the foster brother !

The youth too loved the maid ; Nature had placed
The germ within their hearts, where it had lain
Amidst the darkness of an erring fate
Till nature called it forth to bud and bloom—
Each sorrowed for this love ; each struggled hard
To stifle it—when they had striven in vain,
Lest that their friend should suffer from the thing,
Each then resolved to see the other one
No more on earth :—they met at length to part ;
'T was then that first they knew each other's love
Confessed at parting—parting when confessed—
And without even a kiss, they spoke the sad,
Sad word, farewell !

Meanwhile the husband, from some circumstance,
Had grown suspicious of his young wife's love ;
He was admonished when this parting scene
Was to take place ;
And, leaving for a moment honor's path, became
A witness to it all ! It broke his heart !

(Marinella faints upon Casimir's breast.)

Cold as the marble from Carrara's mine
Sweet—sweet—and cold! (*Kissing her.*) Mine is a poor right
To those cold kisses now! Within there!

Enter Basil and Servant.

Bas. My lord, I do conjure you, fly!
The dreaded menials of the Ten are now
Even at the gates.

Cas. Look there!

Bas. My lord?

Cas. Bear her to her chamber! Basil, see to her,
While I remain to speak these officers.

[*Exeunt Basil and Servants, carrying off Marinella.*
Your errand, sirs? (*Enter officers.*)

First officer. We are the servants of the august Ten.

Cas. I know 't—and know, too, there is death
Within thy summons. Whom seek you here?

First officer. We are commanded to take
The person of Lord Casimir, who stands charged
With Treason 'gainst the State, and with the death
Of Count Caraffa.

Cas. I am Lord Casimir: but give me leave
To speak a word within, I'll go with you. [*Exit, L.*

Second officer. He may escape.

First officer. He cannot for his life—there are others placed
To guard the outward wall.

Enters Casimir, followed by Marinella, Basil, Lorenzo, &c.

Mar. My lord! my lord! oh do not leave me thus!
I will do all that your wronged heart may wish—
My duty and devotion shall be yours;
Oh! do not cast me off—my heart is breaking!

Cas. It is a gleam of joy upon the grave!
It comes too late, but by its mellowing light

I may die calmer!
Could love's poor victims only know of this,
It might bring ease to many a bleeding heart!
Love unrequited feels not half its sting,
When pity thus is poured into the wound.
Oh! I could almost live.

Mar. Ah! these men! why are they here?
Oh! I remember now—oh! heavens! the Duke! the Ten!
They shall not take thee hence:—no! no!
They shall not! I will die to save you!

Cas. Each moment now makes death more bitter—
I had designed a nobler death than this,
So thrust on me.

Is there no way between? no middle course
To save my neck from the vile headsman's axe,

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 527 191 5

. R2626

Hollinger Corp.
pH 8.5